IMPRIMATUR.

Guil. Sill, R. P. D. *Henr.* Epiſc.
ept. 17. 1677. *Lond.* à Sacris Domeſticis.

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A

SERMON

Preached at *Biſhops-Stortford*, *Auguſt* 29. 1677.

BEFORE

The Right Reverend Father in God,

HENRY,

Lord Biſhop of

LONDON, &c.

At his Lordſhip's primary Viſitation.

By Jo. GOODMAN, D. D.
Rectour of *Hadham*.

LONDON,
Printed for *R. Royſton*, Bookſeller to His moſt Sacred Majeſty, at the Angel in *Amen-Corner*. 1677.

TO

The Right Reverend Father in God,

HENRY,

Lord Biſhop of *LONDON*,

One of the Lords of His MAJESTIE'S
moſt Honourable Privy Council.

My LORD,

WHen I compoſed the following Sermon, at your Lordſhip's command, I propounded no other thing to my ſelf, but the doing ſervice to the Souls of men, by inviting them into the Communion of the Church of Chriſt; *and the animating and encouraging my Brethren of the Clergy, that labour in the ſame good and holy Work. Then which two things I knew nothing more ſeaſonable and neceſſary for the Age we live in, or more compliant with your Lordſhip's Deſign in your Viſitation. And therefore though I had a juſt Reverence of the Auditory, and a due ſenſe of my own Imperfections; yet the aforeſaid Conſideration, together with that of your Lordſhip's Candour, would*

not ſuffer me much to doubt, but that the Sermon would be approved by your Lordſhip, and accepted by all good and wiſe men that heard it.

For I called to mind, that as the Greeks *ſay of their Goddeſs* Ὑγίεια, Dea, Bona valetudo, placatur quâcunque re quis velit ei litare: *ſo, however weak and ſickly Minds (like cachectick Bodies) may be nice, phantaſtick and captious; yet thoſe that are ſound and ſtrong are benign and generous; and with ſuch, every thing that is ſober, and well-intended, is well taken.*

Nevertheleſs I muſt acknowledge, that when afterwards your Lordſhip declared your pleaſure that I ſhould print my Sermon, methought the caſe was altered: for being ſenſible before, how difficult a matter it was to contrive ſo copious a Subject (as I had before me) within the limits of an hour's Diſcourſe, I was eaſily aware how much harder it would be (in ſo narrow a compaſs) to ſatisfie all the ſcruples and curioſities of thoſe that ſhould not onely have a tranſient glimpſe, but a leiſurely peruſall. And beſides, I was not ignorant how different the condition of a Sermon was, when preſented in dead letters, from it ſelf, when inlivened by the voice and paſſion of a very mean Oratour.

But

But after all, I conſidered it was my duty, not to diſpute, but to obey, and that your Lordſhip's Judgment was ſufficient for my ſecurity. And therefore (all excuſes ſet aſide) I here humbly preſent to your hand, what before I preached in your hearing.

And now, my Lord, having this opportunity, I crave leave, not onely to make acknowledgment of my own peculiar Obligations to your Lordſhip, (which I doe with a juſt ſenſe of Duty and Gratitude,) but to report the Apprehenſions of your Clergy in theſe parts of your Dioceſe, and the great Contentment they take under your Lordſhip's Government. They are greatly comforted by your Zeal for the Proteſtant Religion; incouraged by your Lordſhip's vigilant Care of their intereſts and concerns; directed in their Studies, Miniſtry and Converſation, by your prudent Counſels; animated by ſo great an Example; and eſpecially obliged by the Benignity of your Preſence and Condeſcenſion to them at your Viſitation. All which they cannot forbear to expreſs ſuch a ſenſe of, that they look upon it as a great Bleſſing of Almighty God, in committing this part of his Church to your Lordſhip's Care and Government.

For, my Lord, we cannot doubt but Piety and Devotion will commend it ſelf to all that are ſerious: that

that Paternal Mildneſs and Clemency will work upon the ingenuous: that well-tempered Severity is the way to reclaim the vicious: and that Charity and Generoſity will oblige all humane nature. And therefore, where there is ſuch a conjunction of real and powerfull Cauſes, we are able eaſily to calculate happy and ſignal Effects; as, that the Church ſhall recover its native and ancient Glory, and the Genius of this great People be marvellouſly improved. Which Succeſſes that it will pleaſe the Great and True OEcumenical Biſhop to crown your Lordſhip's Endeavours with, is the ardent deſire of,

My LORD,

Hadham, Sept. 7. Your Lordſhip's

1677. moſt dutifull

and obedient Servant,

J. Goodman.

A

SERMON

Preached at *Biſhops-Stortford*, *Auguſt* 29. 1677.

BEFORE

The Right Reverend Father in God,

HENRY,

Lord Biſhop of *London*.

S. MATTHEW xvi. 18.

Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church; and the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.

AMongſt the manifold infirmities of humane nature, there is ſcarcely any either more Epidemical and common in experience, or more miſchievous in its effects and conſequences, then that which the *Greeks* very elegantly expreſs by the name of Ἀμέλεια τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης, and which I know not

how more fitly to render, then by calling it *an Humour of running from one Extreme to another:* when men apprehending the evil and unreaſonableneſs of ſome Opinion or Practice, are ſo far tranſported with zeal in deteſtation of it, as that, paſſing by the Mean of Truth and Sobriety, they reſt not till they have fixed upon ſomething elſe quite contrary thereto, though it be every whit as bad as that which they ſtudiouſly ſeek to decline. *As if the utmoſt diſtance from what they are confident is falſe, was the onely ſecurity that what they embrace is true.*

And perhaps, if we well obſerve, we ſhall find that moſt of thoſe Evils which have deformed Religion, and troubled the Peace of the Church of God, have entred at this door. For evidence of which, amongſt very many obſervations which I have at hand to this purpoſe, I will ſpecifie theſe two or three, which (I perſuade my ſelf) will neither be unacceptable to this Learned Auditory, nor remote from the buſineſs in hand.

The firſt Inſtance ſhall be the riſe of *Arrianiſm:* touching which, it hath been the opinion of ſundry wiſe men, and of the Learned Lord *Bacon* in particular, that that moſt unhappy Controverſie ſprang at firſt from an Antipathy to the Polytheiſm of the Pagans. Some men, it ſeems, being highly ſenſible of the intolerable proſtitution of the Divine Majeſty, when the Honours peculiar to him were communicated with and ſhared amongſt ſo many petty pretended Deities, out of zeal againſt this evil, outran the mark, and, that they might be ſure to worſhip but one God, acknowledged but one Perſon;

and

and ſo, whilſt they went about to ſubvert Idolatry, denied the Trinity.

My ſecond Inſtance ſhall be the obſervation of our Learned *Hooker*, to this effect: When ſome *German* Divines had ſtrained their form of Presbyterian Government to a mighty height, had railed in the Communion with ſuch ſtrict Cautions and Conditions, that (the moſt part of Chriſtians being ſecluded from it) it became more like a private Maſſe then the ſolemn Worſhip of the Church; and, to carry on this deſign the better, had brought in Lay-elders, as a new kind of *Cenſores morum*; up ſtarts *Eraſtus*, and, provoked by this Extreme, runs a risk, and falls into another as bad: for not content to diſprove that new form of Diſcipline, and eſpecially to degrade that novel Office, he proceeds to the denial of all Church-Cenſure and Eccleſiaſtical Government. *As if from ſuch time as the Civil State became Chriſtian, the Rights of the Church were eſcheated to the Prince or State.* And thus, as that Judicious perſon modeſtly expreſſes it, *the Truth was divided between the contending parties, but overſeen and outran by both.* *Hooker* in Pref. to Eccl. Polit.

But the laſt Inſtance I will now make uſe of comes more home to my preſent buſineſs. When the Church of *Rome*, arrogating to it ſelf an Infallibility, and aſſerting to the Pope an univerſal Paſtorſhip, had under theſe pretences notoriouſly uſurped upon all Chriſtendome; there were not wanting thoſe, who, ſeeing through this cheat, and deſirous to reform all, bent things ſo far towards the other Extreme, that they endangered the breaking of all in pieces.

For whereas the *Roman* Church had claimed and exerciſed an exorbitant power of making and impoſing what Articles of Faith ſhe pleaſed; Theſe were ſo far from that, as that they would ſcarcely allow the Church authority to define matters of Order and *Decorum*. Becauſe the Governours in the *Roman* Communion were arrived at too great a height, the Biſhops becoming (like the *Ephori* among the *Spartans*) able to check and controll Sovereign Princes; therefore, to avoid this danger, all ſhall be levelled to a Plebeian Parity. Before the intereſt of the Church was ſo great, as that it drew (under one pretence or other) almoſt all Cauſes from the Civil Tribunals to Eccleſiaſtical cogniſance: but now, to prevent this for the future, all Juriſdiction ſhall be taken from it. In ſhort, the Church was thought to be too rich before, *Religio peperat Divitias, & filia devoraverat matrem:* now therefore the onely way to revive the Primitive Purity, is to reduce the Primitive Poverty. And ſo upon the whole matter, from an abhorrence of the Incroachments and Exorbitancies of the *Roman* Church, there aroſe a danger whether there ſhould be any Church at all.

Now conſidering with my ſelf how to obviate theſe and ſeveral other miſchiefs of like nature, and to doe the beſt ſervice I can to this Solemnity, I have made choice of theſe words of our Saviour for my ſubject, *Thou art Peter, and upon*, &c.

Wherein I obſerve theſe three things.

1. A Reſolution or Decree of our Saviour, he will *build him a Church.*

2. The Foundation of this Structure, *Upon this Rock* will I, *&c.*

3. His Prediction of the Succeſs and Duration of this Building, *The Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.*

I deſign to open theſe three things with the greateſt plainneſs and perſpicuity I can, becauſe of the importance and uſefulneſs of the matter; and yet with as much brevity as is poſſible, for I conſider I ſpeak to wiſe men.

PART I. Touching the Firſt, (to avoid all impertinence,) that which I conceive our Saviour means when he ſaith he will build him a Church, is no more nor leſs then this, that he will incorporate all thoſe that profeſs his Name and Religion into a Society. And that he will not content himſelf to have Diſciples and Followers dividedly ſtraggling after him, (how numerous ſoever they may be,) but he will have them united into a Body, formed into a regular Society, make up a Divine Polity, having Unity, Order and Government amongſt themſelves. That as there are ſeveral forms of Civil Society of humane inſtitution; ſo our Saviour would by his Divine Authority inſtitute a Religious Society by the name of *a Church*, whereof He himſelf would be the Head, and which ſhould be ruled and governed by Laws and Officers peculiar to it ſelf. Or, as in the

the Old Teſtament the whole Nation of the *Jews* (though diſtinguiſhed otherwiſe by their reſpective Tribes and Families) made up one People and Church of *Iſrael*; ſo ſhould all Nations upon earth, and every individual perſon that was a Chriſtian, conſpire and make up together one Chriſtian Church.

For the more diſtinct and ſatisfactory apprehenſion whereof, let us conſider, that every regular Society requires theſe four things; namely, 1. a Body, 2. an Head, 3. Union, 4. Order and Government: and all theſe conſpicuouſly concurre to the making up the Church, or ſuch a Society as we have deſcribed.

1. For the Body of the Chriſtian Church, that conſiſts of all thoſe who from time to time in all Ages and Countries are inrolled *in Albo Chriſtianorum*, and have given up their names to *Chriſt*, or are Chriſtians by profeſſion. So the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 12. 27. *Now are ye the Body of Chriſt, and Members in particular*; that is, the whole number of Chriſtians makes up the myſtical Body of *Chriſt*, every individual perſon being a particular Member thereof. And then he addes, verſ. 28. *God hath ſet ſome in the Church, firſt Apoſtles, ſecondly Prophets*, &c. By which it is evident that he ſpeaks of the whole Church as one: for he ſuppoſes the Apoſtles to be Officers of the whole Chriſtian Church, which could not be, if every little parcel of Chriſtians convened together made up a Church in the notion the Apoſtle intends; and conſequently therefore the whole number of Chriſtians (as I ſaid) muſt make up the one Church or Body of *Chriſt*.

Vid. *Theophyl.* in loc.

To

To this purpose, those that are curious observers of the propriety of phrase in the *Greek* tongue do note, that at *Athens*, (from whose Assemblies this name Ἐκκλησία was first taken) when onely the Heads or chief Magistrates were assembled, they called this distinctly Σύγκλητος· when the *Colluvies ex agris* or whole Rabble of people was called together, this they termed Διάκλητος· but Ἐκκλησία was onely used when the whole Body of Citizens within the pale or liberties of the City were assembled.

2. *Christ Jesus* is undoubtedly the Head and Supreme of this Body. He is the Founder of this Order, he gave command for the forming this Society, prescribes Laws and affords protection to it. *Eph.* 5. 23. *He is the Head of the Church, and the Saviour of the Body.* And herein that which Divines call the *Mediatorian Kingdom* of our Saviour properly consists: namely, that not onely in respect of his Divine nature he hath a Sovereignty over the world; but especially that as Θεανθρώπος, or God incarnate, he is Sovereign of the Church, and hath power of Legislation, authority to constitute Officers under him, *jus vitæ & necis*, hath *all Judgment committed to him*, can sentence to life or to utter destruction. Whether *de facto* he hath appointed any Lieutenant or Vicar-general under him over the whole Church, as some pretend, will not be necessary now to inquire; and besides, will be sufficiently clear in the negative by what I shall say by and by.

3. It is not sufficient to an orderly Society, that there be Head and Members, but there must be some Liga-

Ligaments, to the end that there may be Union; that is, that all thoſe Members of this Society, which lie otherwiſe ſcattered through ſo many Ages and Countries, may both become united together, to make up one Body, and alſo joyned to their common Head *Chriſt Jeſus*.

Now as in the natural Body the Nerves which perform this office proceed from the Head, ſo it is here; *Chriſt Jeſus* hath delivered an Inſtitution of Religion, the open profeſſion of which is the Sinew of this Society, the Church: namely, all thoſe that hold and maintain the Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, and eſpecially of the New Teſtament, are united to the Church as Members, and to *Chriſt* as their ſpiritual Head. For this is the Charter of our Corporation, and contains the Laws of our Societie: he that addes to this diſtracts and divides the Church, and he that abates or diminiſhes it incroaches upon the Prerogative of *Chriſt* the Head. The Church of *Chriſt* and the profeſſion of the Religion of *Chriſt* are of equal extent, and the Holy Scripture is the Standard of both.

But as a ſymbolical repreſentation of this Union (we are ſpeaking of,) or rather as a ſtanding federal Rite of this Society, our Lord *Chriſt* hath alſo appointed the frequent participation of the holy Sacrament, wherein we ſolemnly recognize him our Head, and our Fellow-Chriſtians as Members of the ſame Body: which therefore is properly called the *Synaxis* or *Communion*. To which purpoſe the Apoſtle, alluſively to the New Teſtament, ſpeaks of the Church of the *Jews*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 2, *&c. they were all*

all baptized unto Moſes in the cloud and in the ſea, and did all eat the ſame ſpiritual meat, and did all drink the ſame ſpiritual drink, &c. But more clearly and expreſly of the Chriſtian Church, verſ. 17. *For we being many are one Body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.* The ſenſe of which place, and the ſumme of what I have been ſaying, is this, That as by holding and profeſſing the Religion of *Chriſt Jeſus* contained in the Holy Scripture we are united to him, and Members of his Church, materially; ſo it is our duty that this be ſolemnly and formally executed by thoſe holy Rites of his inſtitution.

4. But in the fourth and laſt place, it is not ſufficient that there be an Union of the Head and Members, but there muſt be Order alſo amongſt the Members themſelves, otherwiſe it would be a Multitude, but not a Church. Wherefore in this Society, though, as we have ſaid, all that profeſs and acknowledge the Doctrine of the Scriptures are Members, yet ſome of thoſe are of an higher quality, and more publick uſe and influence, then others, namely ſuch as bear Office in this Society. So ſaith the Apoſtle, *Eph.* 4. 11. *He gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts, ſome Paſtours and Teachers,* εἰς καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων, i. e. *for the orderly knitting of the Saints together* into a Body, and *for the edifying that Body of Chriſt.* Theſe and their Succeſſours are the Governours and Officers of the Church as a Church, or as it is ſuch a peculiar, diſtinct and ſpiritual Society. To theſe the Head of this Society hath promiſed *his preſence to the end of the world*; to theſe he hath *given the keys of the Kingdom of hea-*

ven,

ven, saying, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven*, &c. and, *He that receiveth you receiveth me; and he that refuseth you refuseth him that sent me.* These, as I said, are the Governours of the Church as a Church. But because (as it was well observed by *Optatus Milevitanus*) *Respublica non est in Ecclesia, sed Ecclesia in Republica*; and it was not the design of our Saviour, in constituting this Society of a Church, to revoke or abrogate the powers and authority of the Civil state: therefore Kings and Princes (though as such they are not properly Officers of the Church in its peculiar consideration, yet) have and retain their ancient right of Legislation, and prescribing to the external management of this Society. In which respect it was said by the great and famous *Constantine*, that he was Ἐπίσκοπος τῶν ἔξω, that is, a Civil Bishop, or, as we commonly speak, supreme Governour or Moderatour of the Church.

And now, having shewed what our Saviour meant, when he said he would build him a Church, it will neither be difficult nor unusefull to shew the Reasons of this Institution, *i. e.* Why our Saviour would not leave every single Believer upon his own score, but would have them associated and incorporated as afore said. The great usefulness of this Institution might easily be made appear in very many instances: but I will mention but these three.

1. It pleased our Saviour *Christ* to require such a conjunction and combination of Christians, to the intent that by that means they might be the better able to hold up his Truth and Religion in the world.

For

For if this had been left to the care of particular Christians singly and separately, such is the diversity of their capacities and apprehensions, so different have been their educations, are their interests, and would be their expressions, and so great would be the difficulty of holding intelligence and correspondence with each other, that it is not imaginable how the mind of *Christ* should have been uniformly and intirely represented to all those that would have been concerned in it: therefore in regard this summe was too great to be laid out upon private security, it pleased him to deliver this great *Depositum* to the Society of the Church.

This is that which I take to be meant in that famous passage of the Apostle, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. where the Church is called στύλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας, *the pillar and ground of Truth.* I know well what perverse use they of the Church of *Rome* make of this Text, and what pitifull shifts some on the other side make to avoid that danger; and therefore I thought it worth my labour, in a former Discourse of this nature, and at a like Solemnity, to vindicate the Text from the hands of those that abuse it, and the world by it. But at present it is sufficient to intimate, that though it be evidently true, that the truth of Christianity neither depends upon the authority, nor needs the warranty of men, yet was the Society of the Church a wise Expedient of our Saviour, for the holding forth and holding up his Religion in the world.

Nor let any one suspect that this will give any countenance to the unwritten Traditions of the

Church of *Rome*, or evacuate the juſt dignity and authority of the Holy Scriptures: for it is and muſt be acknowledged, that the written Word is the immediate Conſervatory of the Truth of the Goſpel; yet the Society of the Church doeth the ſame thing remotely and generally, which the other doeth particularly and immediately: that is to ſay, this holds up the Holy Scripture, preſerves and aſſures that as the Summe and Code of our Religion; as on the other hand the Holy Scripture rules to us the particular Doctrines and Laws thereof. To which ſenſe both S. *Auſtin* and S. *Jerom* agree, when they affirm, that as the *Jewiſh* Church was *Columna Nubis*, the Pillar of a Cloud, or was incorporated by God to hold up that Ceremonial form of Religion in the Old Teſtament; ſo the Society of the Chriſtian Church is *Columna Lucis*, or was inſtituted to hold up that Truth whereof the former was a ſhadow, namely the Doctrine of the Goſpel, in the times of the New Teſtament. And Saint *Auſtin* more particularly expreſſes himſelf in his 42. Epiſtle, *Radix Chriſtianæ Societatis, per Sedes Apoſtolorum & Succeſſiones Epiſcoporum, certâ per orbem propagatione diffunditur*: i. e. Chriſtian Religion is preſerved and propagated by the advantage of eſtabliſhed Order and ſucceſſive Government of the Church.

2. *Chriſt Jeſus* would have a Church, and his Diſciples imbodied and formed into a Society, that, by means of ſuch conjunction and relation, they might be more uſefull to one another, by inſtruction, admonition, counſel, reproof, and example; and ſo not onely hold up the Doctrine joyntly, but hold one another mutually to the practice of Chriſtianity,

nity, as having a common care and concern for the good of each other, for the ſake of the whole.

To which purpoſe it is obſerved by the generality of Learned men, that *Gen.* 4. 26. and 6. 1. in the infancy of the world, there was a diſtinction between the Sons of God and the Sons of men: by the latter of which they underſtand that profane part of mankind that caſt off all care of God and Religion; but by the former, ſuch as retained a ſenſe of God and care of his worſhip; and that theſe formed themſelves into a Body, and became a diſtinct Society, for the better practice and proſecution of that great affair of Religion.

But the influence which this proviſion hath upon the practice of Religion is ſo notoriouſly evident, that the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 10. 23, *&c.* diſcourſes after this manner to thoſe *Jewiſh* Chriſtians that ſeemed to ſtagger in their devotion; *Let us hold faſt the profeſſion of our faith without wavering: Let us conſider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forſaking the aſſembling of our ſelves together, as the manner of ſome is.* *For*, ſaith he, *if we ſin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth*, &c. The plain ſenſe of which remarkable paſſage is this, that keeping Church-Society is the way to keep upright in our profeſſion, and warm in our practice; and the forſaking of that, the ready way to Apoſtaſy: and no other tolerable ſenſe can be made of the diſcourſe of the Apoſtle but this. To which I think it not amiſs to adde a worthy Obſervation of that Learned man Mr. *H. Thorndyke*. He inquires "what ſhould be the reaſon, that the "people

Thorndyke Service of God in Religious Aſſemblies.

" people of the *Jews* before their Captivity were " upon all occaſions prone to lapſe into Idolatry; " whenas after their Return from that Captivity " they never ſeemed inclinable that way; and yet " notwithſtanding, before the Captivity they were " never deſtitute of the extraordinary Admonitions " of Prophets, ſent from God on purpoſe to warn " them of that ſin and danger, and after the Capti- " vity they were deprived of this ſingular advantage: And at laſt gives this ingenious and probable account; *viz.* " Before the Captivity, though they " had the frequent Admonitions of the Prophets, as " afore ſaid; yet they had few or no Synagogues, " inſomuch as we never hear of any Synagogue- " worſhip during all that time: but after the Capti- " vity Synagogues were very numerous, and by " means of the frequency of thoſe Aſſemblies he " thinks it might come to paſs, that they were kept " from an evil they were ſo prone to, that Prophecy " it ſelf could not cure them of it.

3. Church-Order was appointed to fit and train men up for the Kingdom of Heaven; to teach and inure men to live in Love and Peace and Order here in a Church Militant, that ſo they might be fit for eternal Society in the Church Triumphant.

It ſeems to be one reaſon, (amongſt many others) why thoſe that are deſigned for the Service of the Church are uſually bred up in Colleges and Univerſities; namely, that Collegiate life accuſtoming them to Order and Obedience, diſpoſes them to be ſubject to the Government of the Church. And as a College is an Embleme of the Church, ſo is the Church

Church below of that above; and the Education in the one makes men fit Candidates of the other. For it is not to be imagined that any mere Ornaments of Knowledge and Eloquence, or any other Gift or Grace, how eximious ſoever, can qualifie a man for the celeſtial Manſions, and make him fit to live in eternal Love and Peace and Concord with holy Spirits, that could not be brought to be peaceable, humble and obedient, and ſubmit to the Culture and Diſcipline of the Church. There were therefore (upon the whole matter) great Conſiderations why our Saviour ſhould build a Church. And ſo much for the Firſt part of my Text.

PART II. I proceed now to the Second, the Foundation of this Fabrick, *Upon this Rock will I build my Church.*

I am ſure it can be no new thing to Learned men, to note what triumphs they of the Church of *Rome* make upon this paſſage. *Tu es Petrus* is urged upon all occaſions; as if not onely S. *Peter*, but the whole Succeſſion of Popes were hereby made infallible Oracles of Truth, and univerſal Paſtours over the whole Church of *Chriſt*.

If we object that *Petrus* and *Petra* are two things, they will anſwer that our Saviour ſpake in the *Syriack* tongue, and that there *Cepha* anſwers to both. But if we inquire why *Rock* muſt needs ſignifie *Head of the Church*, or why to be *built upon* as *a Rock* muſt ſignifie to *govern*; eſpecially if we inquire why S. *Peter* might not have a Privilege conferred upon him, that ſuch a man as *Hildebrand*, *Boni-*

Boniface, *Innocent*, or ſome other either ignorant, lewd or enormous Biſhops of *Rome* were not fit for: we ſhould receive but ſlender ſatisfaction from them.

However I will not inſiſt upon thoſe Subtilties, but deliver my ſelf plainly, for the unfolding this part of my Text, in theſe two Points.

1. It is notoriouſly evident to any man that conſults the Scriptures impartially, that the whole number of Apoſtles have that ſaid of them which is tantamount to this in the Text: I mean, the Church is ſaid to be built upon them as well as upon S. *Peter*. For example, *Eph.* 2. 20. the Church is ſaid to be *built upon the foundation of the Apoſtles, Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone:* that is, *Chriſt Jeſus* firſt ſet on foot the Doctrine of the Goſpel, and gave them, his Apoſtles, both commiſſion and abilities to preach it, and gather Diſciples, and form them into the Society of a Church; and they accordingly did ſo. Again, *Rev.* 12. 1. the Chriſtian Church is deſcribed by *a Woman cloathed with the Sun, having the Moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve Stars*, i. e. ſhining and glorying in the Doctrine of the Twelve Apoſtles. But more plainly *Rev.* 21. 19. *the new Jeruſalem*, that is, the Chriſtian Church, is ſaid to have *twelve foundations*, anſwerable to the number of the Apoſtles.

To which purpoſe it is farther conſiderable, that the generality of the Fathers either make the *Petra*, or Foundation here in the Text, to be the Faith and Profeſſion of S. *Peter*, which was the Belief of all the reſt, (though, according to the uſual zeal and

and promptneſs of S. *Peter*, firſt uttered by him:) or elſe they conceive this dignity to have been conferred upon S. *Peter* in the name of all the reſt. According to the former of theſe goe S. * *Chryſoſtom*, *Theophylact*, *Epiphanius*, S. *Auſtin*, and ſeveral others: but || *Origen*, S. *Cyprian*, *Tertullian*, and ſome others, the latter way.

* S. *Chryſ.* in Matt. Hom. 55. *Theophyl.* in loc. *Epiph.* c. Cathar. *Aug.* trac. 10. in 1. Joannis. || *Orig.* tr. 1. in Matt. *Cypr.* Ep. 27. *Terr.* de Pudic. c. 21.

2. But we will not ſtick to grant that S. *Peter* had ſomething peculiar conferred upon him here by our Saviour, namely this, that he ſhould have the honour firſt to plant the Chriſtian Faith, and ſo lay the firſt foundations of Chriſtian Churches, both amongſt *Jews* and Gentiles. Which is not onely the very account which S. *Ambroſe* gives of the meaning of this Text, but that which appears eventually true in the Hiſtory of the *Acts*. For accordingly, Chap. 2. by a Sermon of his on the day of Pentecoſt he converted 3000 Souls to the Faith of *Chriſt*, all which verſ. 41. were *baptized*, and formed into the order of a Church, and were the Firſt-fruits of the *Jews*. Again, Chap. 10. he is ſent to *Cornelius*, and converts and baptizes him and his family; and ſo laid the foundation of the firſt Church of the Gentiles.

S. *Ambroſ.* Serm. 47.

So that the meaning of this part of my Text is no more but this, that S. *Peter*, in reward of his forwardneſs in confeſſing *Chriſt Jeſus*, ſhould have the honour to lay the firſt Foundation of his Church, as afore ſaid. And of the truth of this interpretation I perſuade my ſelf any indifferent perſon will be abundantly ſatisfied, that will take the pains to conſult the Learned *Camero* upon the place.

Camer. Myrothec.

PART III. I now haſten to the Third and laſt Part of my Text, namely, the Prediction of our Saviour touching the event of this buſineſs, the Succeſs and Duration of this Structure, *The Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.*

And here we have great variety amongſt Interpreters. Some, conſidering that Gates uſe to be the greateſt Strengths and moſt fortified places, think that by *the Gates of Hell* is meant the Force and Power of the Devil and infernal Spirits; and that conſequently the meaning of our Saviour is, that all the Perſecutions which the Devil and his Agents raiſe againſt the Church ſhall never be able to deſtroy or extinguiſh it. Others, remembring that of old time the Gates of Cities uſed to be the places of Counſel and Judicature, therefore think that by *Gates of Hell* is meant the Cunning, Craft and Policy of the Devil; and that the meaning of the Prediction is, that neither the Plots and Machinations of the Devil and his Inſtruments ſhall take place againſt the Church, nor particularly thoſe Hereſies and wicked Opinions which he ſuggeſts and foments againſt it ſhall ever be able to corrupt and deprave it.

I do not quarrel with either of theſe interpretations, but I obſerve they both proceed upon a miſtake of the notion of ᾍδης, which I will endeavour briefly to rectifie, and then all will be eaſie.

Now it hath been made plain by ſeveral Learned men, (particularly by the Learned Dr. *Windet* of late,) that ᾍδης, which we render *Hell*, doth not ſignifie

ſignifie the place or the ſtate of Hell-torments, or the puniſhment of the damned, either in the ancient *Greek* Authours, or with *Helleniſtical* Writers, either the Septuagint, or the Writers of the New Teſtament. There is indeed one onely paſſage in the New Teſtament that looks towards ſuch a ſenſe, and that is *Luke* 16. 23. where, as we render it, the rich man is ſaid to be *in Hell:* but that is reconcilable enough with the reſt, if it be duly conſidered.

But the general ſignification of Ἅδης imports onely the ſtate of death, or of the dead, without relation to reward or puniſhment, miſery or happineſs; which theſe inſtances (amongſt many that might with like eaſe be aſſigned) will make evident. *Acts* 2. 24. that paſſage of the Pſalmiſt is applied to our Saviour, *It was not poſſible for him to be held by the bands of death*; and verſ. 27. the phraſe is varied, and there it is ſaid, in the ſame ſenſe, *Thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell*, that is, thou wilt not leave me under the power of death, or in the condition of ſeparate ſouls, but wilt raiſe me up again. And more plainly *Rev.* 20. 14. θάνατος and ᾅδης *death and hell are caſt into the lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone*; that is, mortality is deſtroyed, the ſtate of corruption and death are diſſolved, or, as the Apoſtle elſewhere expreſſes it, *mortality is ſwallowed up of life.*

For the confirmation of both which interpretations, I will adde the Obſervation of Learned men upon that Article of our Creed, where *Chriſt* is ſaid to have *deſcended* εἰς ᾅδου *into hell.* They note, that in very few of the ancient Creeds thoſe words [εἰς ᾅδου] See Biſhop *Uſher* de Symbol. Biſhop *Pearſon* on the Creed, Artic. 5.

ᾅδου] are to be found; and especially that wherever they are to be found, there those other words [*dead and buried*] are left out, save onely in the *Aquileian* Creed, where indeed both the phrases are used. Whereupon it follows, that in the sense of Antiquity Death and ᾅδης, or to be in ᾅδης, (which we render *Hell*,) and to be in the state of death, were tantamount expressions.

So then the meaning of our Saviour in my whole Text is this; *I will, by the Ministry of my Apostles, and by thy especiall agency,* (Peter) *gather Disciples to my Name and Doctrine, and I will have these formed into the orderly Society of a Church, united to Me their Head, and to each other as in a common Body, having Laws, Officers and Government peculiar: And this my Church shall continue in the world as long as the world it self lasts, subject to no fate, mortality or intercision; nothing shall ever supplant or supersede it.*

And thus I have, according to my promise, with all possible brevity explained the Doctrine of my Text. Let me now crave leave to presse the Consequences of this Doctrine (upon your Practice) suitably to the present occasion, and I will conclude. I will confine my self to these three Inferences.

First, Since our Saviour took care to found a Church, let us be of this Society, and value the Privilege of being of *Christ*'s Church.

Secondly, Since there is such a mighty Usefulness of this Foundation and Society, let us especially that

that are Officers thereof endeavour to uphold it, and doe it all the Honour and Service we can.

Laſtly, Since our Saviour hath propheſied, that all *the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it*, let us all, that love God's Church, bear up our ſelves againſt all Diſcouragements and Deſpondencies on the truth and infallibility of his Prediction.

I. APPLIC. Touching the firſt; To be of the Chriſtian Church is to be of the moſt honourable Society in the whole world. It is to be of an Order whereof the Lord *Chriſt* is Founder and Protector, and whereof all the holy Angels are admirers: to be incorporate into the Fellowſhip of Apoſtles, Prophets, Martyrs, and all holy men: to be of that myſtical Body of which the Son of God is Head: to be Citizens of the *new Jeruſalem*, Fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the Houſhold of God.

Obſerve what glorious things the Apoſtle ſpeaks *Hebr.* 12. 22, 23, 24. *Ye are come to mount Sion, to the City of the living God, to the heavenly Jeruſalem, to an innumerable company of Angels, to the general Aſſembly and Church of the firſt-born whoſe names are written in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to Jeſus the Mediatour of the new Covenant, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.* And all this means nothing elſe but, You *Jews* are tranſlated from *Moſes* to *Chriſt*, from your old Synagogue to the Chriſtian Church.

God's Church is his Family, which he eſpecially takes care of and provides for. He that is of it, is under

under the *Shechinah*, the wing of the Divine Majesty, and his special Providence.

His Church is his Vineyard, and he not onely *sets a hedge about it*, but *builds a watch-tower in it*. No Nation under heaven had such signal instances of God's presence and blessing as the people of the *Jews*, whilst they continued to be his Church: but when they ceased to be a Church, they ceased to be a People, were the most abject and contemptible rabble upon earth.

Above all, to be of God's Church is to be under the means of Grace, the dew of Heaven, the motions of the good Spirit, and the hopes of Glory. For to the Church hath he promised his presence and assistence; there are dispensed the lively Oracles of God, there hath he provided a constant succession of Dispensers of the bread of life, to fit it to all needs and all capacities.

Is it a small security to our minds, or satisfaction to our Consciences, that we are not left to the deceits and whispers of a private spirit, to personal conjectures or secret insinuations, but have the publick Doctrine of the Church?

Is it not a great encouragement of our Prayers, when we are fortified against the just reflexions upon our own meanness and demerits, by the concurrent prayers of all God's people, and mingle our devotions with theirs, that so they may together come up a sweet odour before God?

Is it a ſmall advantage to joyn in that holy Leaguer, and beſiege Heaven by conjoyned and ardent importunities? *Coïmus in cœtum*, (ſaith *Tertullian*) *ut ad Deum quaſi manu factâ precationibus ambiamus orantes.*

Can it chuſe but be a great animation and incouragement to us, to have before our eyes all the great Examples in God's Church?

Is it not a mighty matter, to have our Faith ſtrengthened and inlivened, our Love inflamed, our Comforts raiſed by the holy Communion? Will not the flame of others kindle our Zeal and Affections? And ſhall it not put us into an ecſtaſie of Devotion, to ſee as it were *Chriſt* crucified before our eyes, opening his Arms to us, and pouring out his bloud for us?

Socrates is ſaid to have given ſolemn thanks to God, (amongſt other things,) that by his providence he was a Philoſopher, and not a Barbarian: and ſhall the twilight or dawnings of natural light be more raviſhing then the bright beams of the Sun of righteouſneſs?

Shall *Tully* break out in a kind of ecſtaſie, *O philoſophia, unus dies ex præceptis tuis actus peccanti immortalitati eſt anteponendus?* and ſhall not we much rather break out with the Pſalmiſt, *A day in thy courts is better then a thouſand*; and, *I had rather be a door-keeper in the houſe of God, then dwell in the tents of wickedneſs?*

The

The Chief Captain, *Acts* 22. 28. gloried that he was a free Citizen of *Rome*, and thought it worth the purchace of a great ſumme of money; *But*, ſaith S. *Paul*, *I was free born*: and is it a ſmall thing to us, that we are born and brought up in the Church of God?

The *Romans* generally had ſuch an opinion of the Auguſtneſs of their City, that to be proſcribed or baniſhed was counted a capital puniſhment, and a civil death thought equal to a natural.

The *Pythagoreans*, when any one forſook their School, were wont to carry out a Coffin for him attended with a funeral pomp. And ſhall we eſteem thoſe alive that forſake the Church, the School of *Chriſt*?

The Primitive Chriſtians had ſuch an eſteem of the dignity and privilege of the Church, that *Cœtu arceri*, to be Excommunicate, was ſo dreadfull a doom, as that thoſe that pronounced the Sentence were wont to doe it with weeping and lamentation. *Ye ought to have mourned*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 5. 2. and, 2 *Cor.* 12. 21. *I ſhall bewail many.* And to be caſt out of the Church, and to be delivered up to Satan, were accounted equivalent. *Nam judicatur magno cum pondere, ut apud certos de Dei conſpectu, ſummúmque futuri Judicii præjudicium eſt, ſi quis ità deliquerit, ut à communione orationis & omnis ſacri commercii relegetur*, ſaith *Tertullian* in his Apology for Chriſtianity.

And

And who is there that hath been converſant in Church-antiquity, that hath not obſerved what repentance and tears, what ſolicitations and interceſſions, what humble proſtration of themſelves were uſed by thoſe that were fallen under the Cenſures of the Church, to obtain reſtitution to Peace and Pardon? And who that remembers this would ever have thought there ſhould have come a time, when it ſhould be eſteemed a matter of glory, and a point of Saintſhip, to cut off one's ſelf voluntarily, and become a Separatiſt from the Church?

The Church of *Chriſt* is the ſame it was, and the bleſſings and advantages of it are ſtill the ſame: let us endeavour therefore to raiſe up its Glory, to recover the ancient Zeal, and to reſtore its Veneration. And let us all ſay with thoſe in the Pſalm, *Come let us go up to the Houſe of the Lord: Our feet ſhall ſtand within thy Gates, O Jeruſalem.*

II. APPLIC. And this leads me to my Second Application, and to addreſs my ſelf to the Clergy. You, my Reverend Brethren, are not onely Members, but Officers of this Society: give me leave (being in this place) to recommend to you very earneſtly the doing all the honour and ſervice you can to the Church of *Chriſt*. Put the caſe we have but ſlender Encouragements, and live in an ungratefull Age, that men will miſinterpret our Zeal, blaze our Infirmities, reſiſt our Endeavours, and oppoſe their own good: yet we are in an honourable Employment, we ſerve a good Maſter, and ſhall not loſe our reward. Therefore let me take the confidence to preſs upon you the following particulars.

First, Let us be ſure, for the ſake of the Church, to pay ſuch Reverence to our Superiours in it, as may render them Venerable in the eyes of all others. For aſſure our ſelves, that if we ſlight their Perſons, and diſpute their Injunctions, we teach other men to deſpiſe them and our ſelves too, and ruine the whole.

It is a memorable paſſage of our Saviour, *Matt.* 3. 13, *&c.* He comes to *John* the Baptiſt to be baptized of him: *John* forbids him, ſaying, *I have need to be baptized of thee*, &c. And it is certain our Saviour had no need of Baptiſm, having no ſtain of Sin upon him: notwithſtanding ſaith our Saviour, *Suffer it to be ſo now, for it becometh us to fulfill all righteouſneſs*; that is, ſaith *Hugo Grotius*, it became the Son of God and Saviour of the world, to give publick honour and veneration to the Miniſtry of *John* the Baptiſt. And moſt certainly, what became our Saviour towards him, who (as he acknowledges) *was not worthy to unlooſe his ſhoe-latchet*, muſt needs become us towards thoſe that God and man have made our Superiours.

In the next place, Let us take care to ſubmit our private Sentiments to the Judgment of the Church, and not oppoſe our private Opinions to the publick Doctrine. It was a memorable diſcourſe of S. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, Ep. 1. Chap. 11. When he had been delivering his judgment about Long hair, and ſuch other matters of decency, to the reaſons he gives of his judgment in thoſe affairs he ſubjoyns theſe words, verſ. 16. *But if any man ſeem to be contentious, we have no ſuch Cuſtome, neither the Churches*

of

of God. As if he had ſaid, If the reaſons I give prevail not with you, yet the practice of the Church is with me, and the Cuſtom of the Church ought to be ſufficient to rule ſuch a Caſe.

Thirdly, Let us remember it is Church-work we are imployed about, and that work is to be done in peace: we muſt therefore gain upon men by love and gentleneſs, oblige them by condeſcenſion and goodneſs, not exaſperate and drive them from the Church by paſſion and frowardneſs. Eſpecially we muſt be ſure, that we repreſent not the terms of our Communion narrower then needs muſt, leſt we depopulate by ſuch Incloſures, and make the Church become a Conventicle: but conſider well the importance of thoſe words of our Saviour, *He that is not againſt us is with us.*

It is recorded by ſeveral Hiſtorians, that when the *Perſians* had waſted *Greece*, and amongſt other inſtances of barbarity had alſo burnt down the Temples of their Gods; the *Greeks*, when they emerged from the Calamity, and recovered their own Territories, would never after re-build the ruines of thoſe Temples, but left them as they were, that they might be Monuments of the *Perſians* Barbariſm, and keep up in the *Greeks* an everlaſting *odium* and deteſtation of them.

But *Pauſanias*, on the other ſide, obſerves it to have been the wiſedom of the *Macedonians*, that in none of their Conqueſts they ever erected any Trophies, leſt whilſt they perpetuated the memory of their Victories, they perpetuated alſo the Quarrel, *Pauſan.* in Bœot.

and provoked their Enemies to an immortal ſhame and hatred, and to watch an advantage by ſome fatal revenge to blot out their own infamy.

I need not in this Auditory make any Application of theſe two Stories: yet becauſe I would be underſtood by all, I expreſs my meaning thus. We of this Church have ſeverall ſorts of Enemies. There are ſome we can never have peace with, nor ſecurity from; we muſt cheat our ſelves, if we think of any ſyncretiſm or coaleſcency with them: with ſuch therefore the terms of diſtinction muſt be maintained, we muſt ſtand upon our guard, and quit our ſelves like men; there can be no accommodation, nor peace, nor truce, but what is fallacious. But there are others of whom there is hope that they may be gained: and all that I ſay is this, in ſuch a caſe let us rather endeavour to make them good, then exaſperate them by remembring that they have been evil, or reproaching them for what they have done amiſs.

But above all, let us not forget to honour and adorn the Church by true Piety and Vertue. A very bad Opinion recommends it ſelf with great advantage, if the promoters of it ſeem pious and devout: but Profaneneſs and Immorality, if it will not confute, yet will ſhame and baffle the beſt Profeſſion in the world. Therefore, my Brethren, let not us onely have our *Loins girt*, but our *Lamps burning*: That if any ſhall have the folly to reproach our way as a cold formal Devotion, we may effectually convince and ſhame them by the Holineſs of our lives, the Heavenlineſs of our minds, by a great and quick ſenſe of God, and a remarkable Devotion.

That

That it may be ſaid of us as of the Miniſters of Religion in *Origen*'s time, *Hi ſunt qui vivunt ut loquuntur, & loquuntur ut vivunt.*

S. *Hierome* obſerves of the *Platoniſts* and *Stoicks*, that they were wont to hold their Conferences and Diſputes commonly in the Porches of the Temples: of which he imagines this to have been the reaſon, *Ut admoniti auguſtioris habitaculi ſanctitate, nil aliud niſi de virtute cogitarent.* Let the Sanctity of God's Houſe, wherein we daily miniſter, and the Majeſty of the living God we ſerve, awaken and keep alive in us a conſtant gravity, and quick ſenſe of piety. And then the moſt Sceptical men will be aſhamed to blaſpheme Religion, and call it a meer Juggle of the Prieſts, when they ſee us live under the power of it. And then ſhall the Divine Glory deſcend upon us and our Church, as it was wont to doe upon the Ark of God.

III. APPLIC. But to come to a Concluſion: Let us encourage our ſelves touching the eſtate and proſperity of the Church by the Prediction of our Saviour, that *all the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* Let us not be diſquieted with rumours of the ſtrength and number of its Enemies. Though *Ammon* and *Amalek*, the *Philiſtines* and Inhabitants of *Tyre*, I mean, though Atheiſt, Sceptick, Papiſt, Fanatick, all combine againſt it, the Prediction of our Saviour ſhall ſtand.

Joſephus reports of the *Jewiſh* Prieſts, that when *Pompey*'s Army ruſhed rudely into the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, when the Prieſts were buſie about the Sacri-

Sacrifice, and filled all with amazement and conſternation, the Prieſts went on with their buſineſs, neither laid aſide the Sacrifice, nor performed any part of it tumultuarily or timorouſly. They, it ſeems, conſidered they were doing their duty, and imployed in God's work, and therefore did not doubt but he would defend them and bear them out. So let us doe our work undauntedly and courageouſly, that neither the Scoffs of Atheiſts abaſh us, nor the rude Follies of Ignorant perſons move us, nor the Conſpiracy of all together tempt us to ſuch meanneſs of ſpirit, or weakneſs of Faith and courage, as to grow deſpondent, and ſay with *David* at a low ebb of mind, We *ſhall one day fall by the hand of Saul:* but rather imitate that bravery of his with which he diſmay'd and conquered *Goliah*; *The Lord delivered me from the mouth of the Lion, and from the paw of the Bear, and ſhall deliver me from this uncircumciſed Philiſtine.* To which purpoſe let us call to mind the miraculous Providence by which this Church was reared in King *Edward* the Sixth and Queen *Elizabeth*'s days; and withall conſider by what admirable Providences it was reſtored and revived in our days: and then ſurely we ſhall conclude it a fabrick of God's building, and which he will ever protect.

1 Sam. 27. 1.

But if any ſhall be ſo diffident as to ſay, It may be true of the whole Church, that *the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt* that, but this part of it, or this particular Church may periſh: for anſwer, I appeal to whoſoever impartially reads the Scriptures, and hath peruſed Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, to ſay, if he can, whether any Church in the whole world is more truly

truly Evangelical then this, or comes nearer, either for Doctrine or Government, to those founded by the Apostles themselves. And if this be so, why should we doubt of the continuance of the Divine Providence over it?

To which I adde, for a conclusion of all; Look over the History of all Times and Countries, of all States and Kingdoms, and consider if ever any orderly and considerable Society in the world was dissolved otherwise, then by being broken and divided in it self. And let the consideration hereof oblige us to the truest Love and firmest Union amongst our selves. Our Saviour hath told us, that *a Kingdom divided against it self cannot stand*; and the very Kingdom of Satan requires Order, and subsists by Unity. Let it not be true in every instance, especially in this fatal one, that *the children of this world* (much less the subjects of the Kingdom of darkness) *are wiser then the children of light*. But let us (as I have said) sincerely practise our Religion, courageously own our Profession, and *maintain the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace* and Love amongst our selves: And then *all the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against* us. Which God of his mercy grant through *Jesus Christ* our Lord: To whom, *&c.*

FINIS.